DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 368 900 CE 066 101

TITLE	The Impact of Restructuring on the Secretarial Profession. A Survey of Office Professionals.
INSTITUTION	Administrative Development Inst., Holland, MI.
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	27p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Employer Employee Relationship; *Employment Level; *Employment Opportunities; *Employment Patterns; Employment Qualifications; Foreign Countries; *Job Development; Occupational Information; Occupational Surveys; Organizational Change; *Secretaries; Work Attitudes; *Work Environment
IDENTIFIERS	Canada; United States

ABSTRACT

Members of Professional Secretaries International (PSI) were surveyed to discover how corporate restructuring has influenced development of the secretarial profession since 1990. Of the 500 questionnaires mailed to PSI members in the United States and Canada, 174 (34.8%) were returned. Of those surveyed, 71% have been assigned a variety of duties previously performed by management (including purchasing office materials, hiring personnel, training, and supervising, and implementing/supervising quality management programs). As a result of gaining these additional duties, many secretaries have increased enthusiasm for their jobs. At the same time, however, many of those surveyed feel overwhelmed by their large workload, and nearly 73% of those surveyed stated that are now working the equivalent of two or more positions. Although most respondents reported gaining more recognition and respect for their contributions, only 36% have received a promotion and only 28% have been made part of the management team. Fifty-five percent of the respondents indicated feeling positive about the changes in their jobs. Of those who have been assigned new management duties, only 53% have received some type of training to assist them with their new responsibilities. (Contains 25 graphs/tables) (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 368 900

The Impact of Restructuring On the Secretarial Profession

A Survey of Office Professionals

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

K. MENNEN

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Administrative Development Institute

CE066101

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

© 1994 Administrative Development Institute. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted by any method without the author's permission.

Administrative Development Institute
66 West 26th Street
PO Box 1827
Holland, Michigan 49422-1827
Tel. (616) 395-9426

Professional Secretaries International®, PSI®, Certified Professional Secretary®, and CPS® are trademarks of Professional Secretaries International.

For more information on Professional Secretaries International, contact:

Professional Secretaries International
10502 NW Ambassador Drive
PO Box 20404
Kansas City, MO 64195-0404
Tel. (816) 891-6600

Administrative Development Institute
66 W. 26th St., PO Box 1827, Holland, MI 49422-1827
Tel (616) 395-9426 / Fax (616) 395-0309

Seminars • Consulting • Research

for Office Professionals

Kathy Mennen, Director

CONTENTS

Executive Summary 2

The Secretarial Position 4

Corporate Restructuring 5

Types of Restructuring *5*
Changes in Corporate Culture *6*

Effects of Restructuring on the Secretary's Job 7

The Secretary's Workload *7*
Compensation *8*
Job Security *9*
Acquisition of Management Duties *10*
The Secretary as Part of the Management Team *11*
Results of Job Changes *12*

Training for New Challenges 13

Changes in the Profession 16

Methodology and Respondent Demographics 18

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a survey of members of Professional Secretaries International® (PSI®), conducted by the Administrative Development Institute in March 1994. The survey was designed to discover how corporate restructuring has influenced the development of the secretarial profession since 1990. The survey was mailed to 500 secretaries in the United States and Canada; 174 responses were tabulated and analyzed.

The secretarial profession has gone through substantial changes since 1990, when the global economy retracted and companies scrambled to keep viable through various forms of restructuring. This widespread restructuring has decimated the middle management ranks and revised the functions of middle management; and the secretary has picked up many of the duties of middle management positions. Since 1990, 71% of the respondents have been assigned a variety of duties previously performed by management, such as purchasing office materials; personnel hiring, training, and supervision; and implementing or supervising quality management programs.

Gaining these additional duties has resulted in secretaries' having more enthusiasm for their jobs; but at the same time, many secretaries feel overwhelmed by a large workload. Nearly 73% of those surveyed are now working the equivalent of two or more positions.

Secretaries also report that they feel the members of the profession have gained more recognition and respect for their contributions. However, a large number of the respondents reported that the changes in the profession have not resulted in higher pay. Additionally, only 36% of the respondents have received a promotion; and only 28% have been made part of the management team.

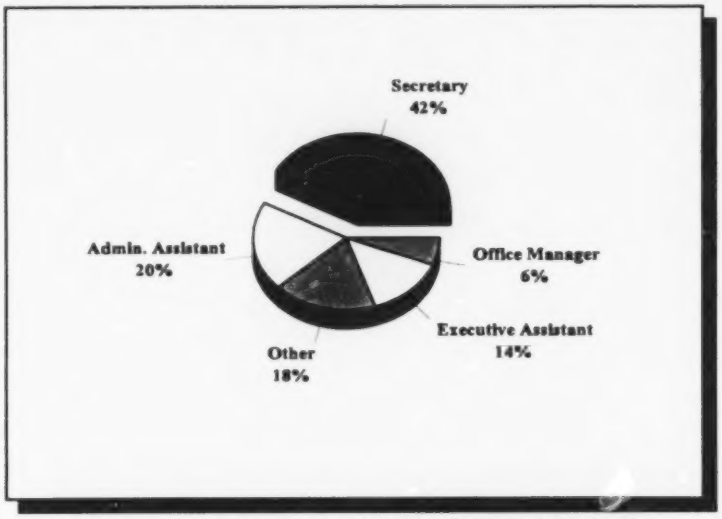
Fifty-five percent of the respondents indicate that they feel positive about the changes in their jobs; however, secretaries are divided on the subject of professional growth opportunities. Forty-five percent of secretaries feel that their growth opportunities have increased; but nearly as many (40%) feel that there has been no change at all. Secretaries are feeling good about the revitalization of their careers--but there is still a long way to go when it comes to pay and recognition issues.

Over half of the secretaries (53%) who have been assigned management duties have received some type of training to assist them with their new responsibilities. However, in many cases, secretaries have not received training directly related to the new duties they have assumed.

The secretary's job has been significantly affected by corporate restructuring. Secretaries have acquired new duties previously performed by management but have not received all the training needed. They have not gained in pay but have gained somewhat more respect and recognition for their work. Many feel that secretaries have been brought into the management team, but very few report becoming "officially" part of the management team through promotion or position restructuring. Secretaries feel that their jobs have been revitalized by these changes; but it is not clear that secretaries have been tangibly rewarded for the additional work and skill required to handle management duties.

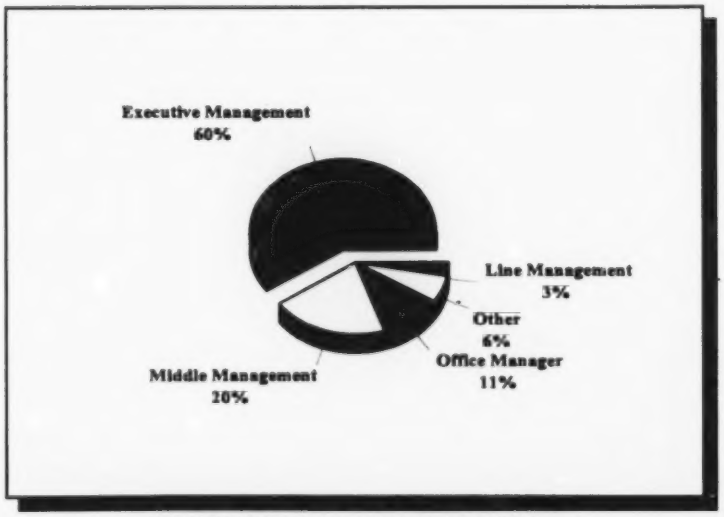
THE SECRETARIAL POSITION

The majority of respondents have the job title of "Secretary" or "Administrative Assistant." Other titles and "Executive Assistant" follow close behind. (Note: Titles containing the word *secretary* have been included in the "Secretary" category.)



JOB TITLES OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Most of the respondents report to executive management, followed by middle management.



RESPONDENTS' SUPERVISORS

CORPORATE RESTRUCTURING

A majority of respondents--80%--report that their companies have restructured since 1990.

TYPES OF RESTRUCTURING

The companies used a variety of restructuring actions. The most frequently used action was shifting or relocation of personnel, followed closely by layoffs or terminations, and major changes in executive management. A small number of companies revamped their corporate structure; and there were very few sellouts or mergers.

Types of Restructuring

Restructuring Action	%
Shifting/Relocation of Personnel	19%
Layoffs/Terminations	18%
Major Changes in Executive Personnel	15%
Hiring Freeze	14%
Plant/Office Closings	8%
Increased Use of Temporary Personnel	8%
Major Change in Corporate Structure	7%
Sale of Company Divisions/Subsidiaries	4%
Merger	4%
Company Was Purchased by Another Company	2%
Other	1%

CHANGES IN CORPORATE CULTURE

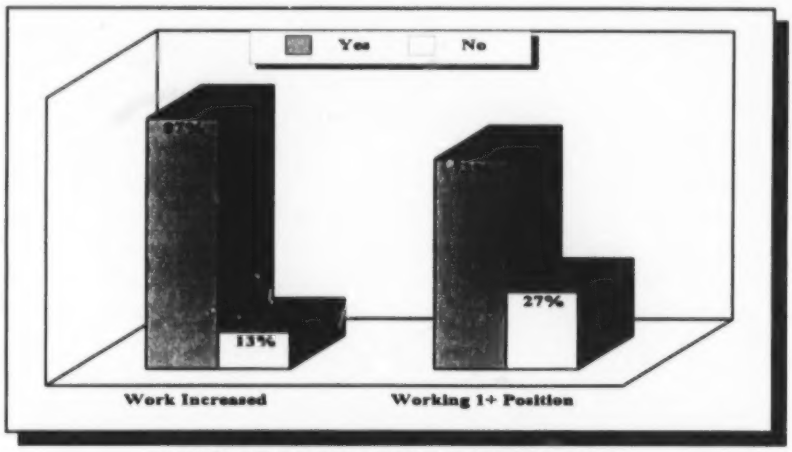
The respondents report some changes in corporate culture since the restructuring. Companies have moved toward more team-oriented structure. The companies' day-to-day operations have apparently not decreased in organization but have increased in intensity due to the restructuring changes.

How has your company's culture changed since 1990?

Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
The environment used to be friendly; now it's tense.	49%	19%	32%
It used to be hierarchical; now it's more team-oriented.	48%	24%	28%
Things used to be organized; now chaos reigns.	27%	25%	48%
The culture has changed so much that I don't feel comfortable here anymore.	17%	22%	61%

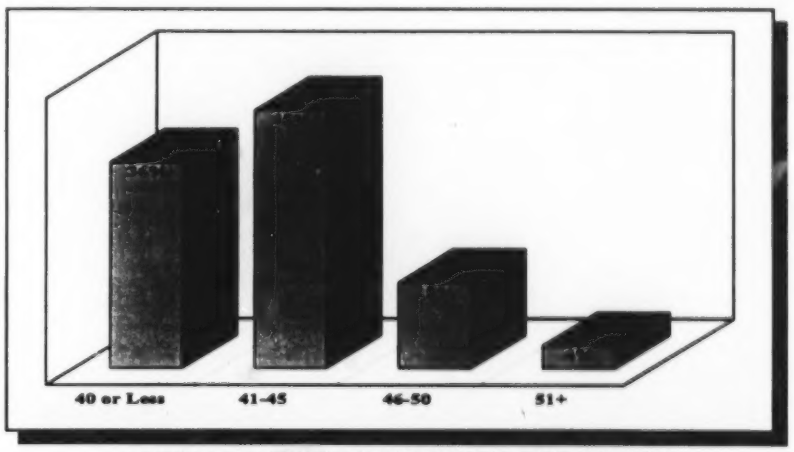
EFFECTS OF RESTRUCTURING ON THE SECRETARY'S JOB

A majority of secretaries reported that their workload increased since 1990, and most secretaries are doing the work of two or more persons or positions.



THE SECRETARY'S WORKLOAD

Although most secretaries have an increased workload, fewer than half (47%) are working more hours than they did before 1990. Many of the respondents report working an average of 41-45 hours per week.



AVERAGE HOURS WORKED PER WEEK

COMPENSATION

Secretaries are compensated for overtime in a variety of ways, most frequently with overtime pay, followed closely by compensatory time.

Compensation for Overtime Work

Method of Compensation	%
Overtime Pay	36%
Compensatory ("Comp") Time	30%
Flexible Hours	14%
None	12%
Bonuses	5%
Significant Raise	2%
Other	1%

Overtime pay is frequently given to non-exempt (non-administrative) employees. The continued classification of the secretary as a non-administrative worker may indicate that many companies have not made the secretary part of the management team in a tangible manner.

JOB SECURITY

Interestingly, 63% of the respondents feel that their jobs are secure, and few (22%) are actively seeking other job opportunities. Those who are looking elsewhere are doing so for a variety of reasons, from job stability to better working conditions. Few are looking because they fear being laid off.

Seeking New Opportunities

Reason for Job Search	%
Not satisfied with current position	35%
Challenge/growth/advancement	22%
Fear of layoff	17%
Desire to work for more stable company	9%
Looking for better pay	7%
Other	6%
Laid off	4%

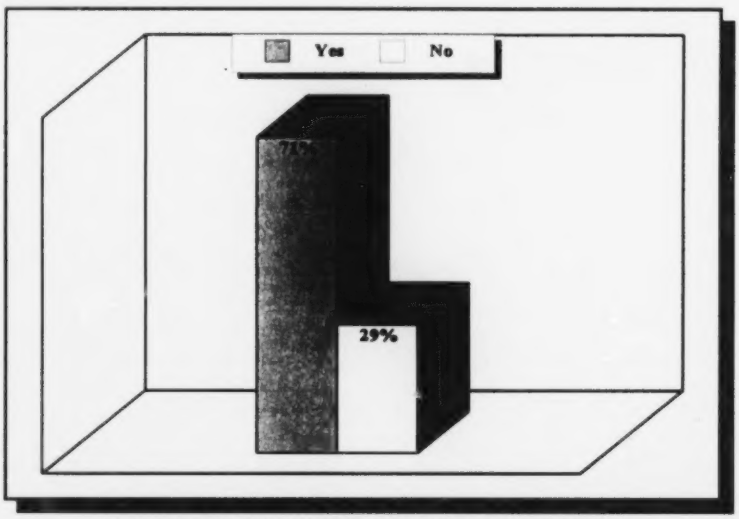
Acquisition of Management Duties

Since 1990, 71% of the respondents have been assigned multiple projects or duties previously handled by management.

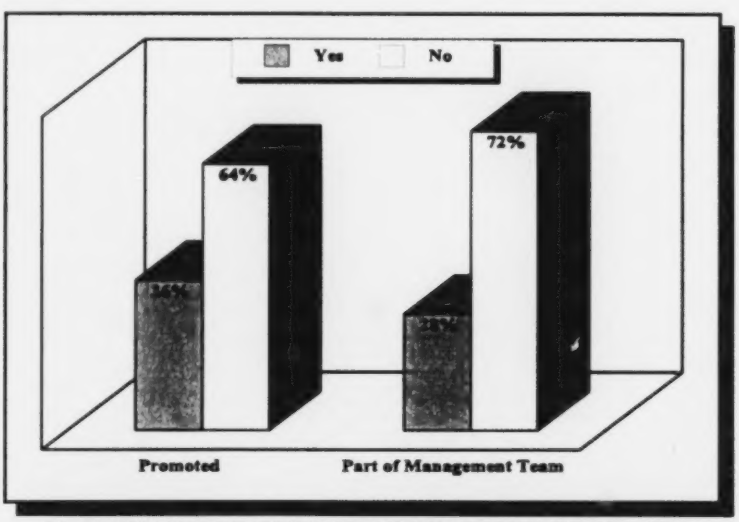
Secretaries' New Management Duties	
Management Duty	**%**
Review/Purchase Office Supplies/Equipment	55%
Research/Prepare Periodic Reports	54%
Train Personnel	43%
Represent Department/Unit at Meetings	39%
Increased Involvement With Clients	39%
Increased Involvement With Vendors/Suppliers	34%
Supervise Personnel	32%
Interview Job Candidates	26%
Other	21%
Hire Personnel	20%
Implement/Supervise Quality Management Program	13%
Review/Purchase Production Materials	12%

THE SECRETARY AS PART OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Even though a majority of secretaries (71%) have gained an impressive array of management duties, few have been tangibly rewarded or recognized. Only 36% have received a promotion in recognition of the changes in their jobs; and only 28% have been made part of the management team.



SECRETARIES WHO HAVE ACQUIRED MANAGEMENT DUTIES



SECRETARIES REWARDED/RECOGNIZED FOR PERFORMING MANAGEMENT DUTIES

RESULTS OF JOB CHANGES

With all of the changes in their jobs, secretaries report feeling excited by their new duties but overwhelmed with a large workload. They report having very little time to think or be creative, which is a crucial deficit for someone handling management duties that require a lot of creativity and "thinking time," such as quality management, supervision, or training.

How do you feel as a result of the changes in your job?

Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I am excited about my new position/ responsibilities.	74%	21%	5%
I am overwhelmed with a large workload/handling more than one position.	44%	27%	29%
I have more time to think or be creative.	17%	19%	64%
I feel no differently than before the changes in my job.	15%	30%	55%

TRAINING FOR NEW CHALLENGES

Just over half of the respondents (53%) have been able to acquire training to assist them with their new responsibilities.

Training Received	
Type of Training	**%**
Software	30%
Written Communication	12%
Team-Building	12%
Oral Communication	10%
Management/Supervision	10%
Human Resources	6%
Quality Management	6%
Negotiation	6%
Training Others	4%
Other	4%

The most frequent type of training secretaries receive is software training. However, the kinds of management duties the secretaries are now handling are not necessarily software-based, such as purchasing office materials, interviewing job candidates, supervising personnel, training personnel, and implementing quality management programs. Secretaries are performing important management duties without getting enough related training to assist them with their new duties.

Training Related to New Management Duties

Management Duty	Secretaries who have this duty	Received training in a related area
Purchase office supplies/equipment	55%	22%
Research/prepare periodic reports	54%	80%
Train personnel	43%	23%
Represent unit at meetings	39%	54%
Increased involvement with clients	39%	54%
Increased involvement with vendors	34%	36%
Supervise personnel	32%	67%
Interview job candidates	26%	47%
Hire personnel	20%	63%
Implement quality management program	13%	100%
Purchase production materials	12%	100%

Secretaries who have not received training report a variety of reasons, the most frequent of which is that their supervisor does not think the training is necessary.

Training Unavailable to Secretaries	
Reason	**%**
Supervisor doesn't think it's necessary	28%
No money available/budgetary constraints	27%
Training is not available at time/place convenient for my needs	24%
I don't have the time/too busy	20%
Other	1%

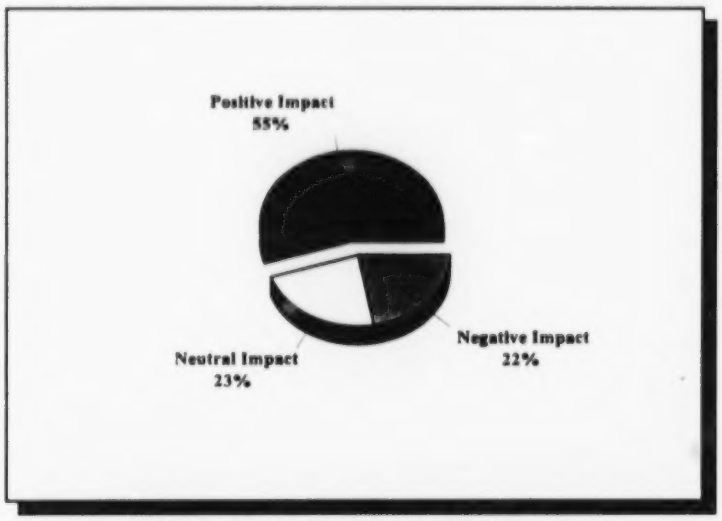
CHANGES IN THE PROFESSION

Secretaries feel that corporate restructuring in general has had a positive effect on the secretarial profession, except for one of the most important areas: compensation.

How do you feel corporate restructuring in general has changed the secretarial profession since 1990?

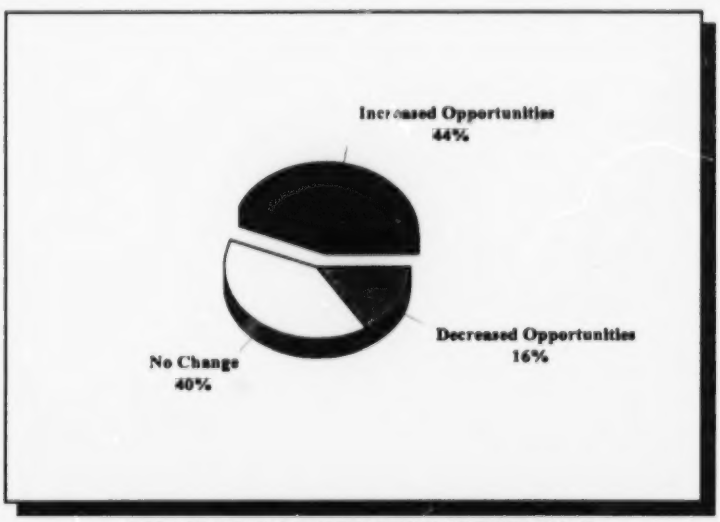
Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
It has resulted in higher pay for secretaries.	25%	33%	42%
There has been no appreciable change in the secretarial profession since 1990.	26%	17%	57%
It has brought secretaries into the management team.	51%	25%	24%
It has brought secretaries more respect for their contributions.	51%	23%	26%
It has given secretaries more opportunities for professional growth.	68%	17%	15%

Secretaries also report that restructuring has had a positive impact on the nature and scope of their jobs.



IMPACT OF RESTRUCTURING ON SECRETARIES' JOBS

Secretaries feel that their opportunities for professional growth have increased at their companies since 1990; however, nearly as many secretaries feel there has been no change at all.



CHANGE IN OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

METHODOLOGY AND RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

This survey was conducted in March 1994 by the Administrative Development Institute. Questionnaires were mailed to 500 PSI members in the United States and Canada. A total of 174 questionnaires were tabulated and analyzed to produce this report.

SURVEY RESPONSE

State	No.	%
Alabama	2	1.1%
Arizona	4	2.4%
Arkansas	2	1.1%
California	4	2.4%
Connecticut	3	1.7%
Florida	2	1.1%
Georgia	3	1.7%
Hawaii	4	2.4%
Idaho	2	1.1%
Illinois	5	2.9%
Indiana	4	2.4%
Iowa	3	1.7%
Kansas	2	1.1%
Kentucky	3	1.7%
Louisiana	3	1.7%
Massachusetts	2	1.1%
Michigan	7	4.0%
Minnesota	4	2.4%
Mississippi	2	1.1%
Missouri	5	2.9%
Montana	2	1.1%

State	No.	%
Nebraska	5	2.9%
New Hampshire	2	1.1%
New York	2	1.1%
North Dakota	3	1.7%
Ohio	3	1.7%
Oklahoma	2	1.1%
Pennsylvania	5	2.9%
South Carolina	3	1.7%
Tennessee	2	1.1%
Texas	6	3.4%
Utah	2	1.1%
Virginia	3	1.7%
Washington	4	2.4%
West Virginia	2	1.1%
Wisconsin	7	4.0%
Wyoming	2	1.1%
Puerto Rico	1	0.6%
Canada	23	13.5%
Other (responded anonymously)	29	16.7%
Total	174	100%

Highest Education Level	
Education	**%**
High School Diploma	21%
Attended Seminars	20%
CPS® Holder	20%
Some College Work	18%
Technical School Certificate	7%
Associate's Degree	7%
Bachelor's Degree	5%
Other	2%
Master's Degree	0%

Years With Current Employer	
Years	**%**
1-5 Years	26%
6-10 Years	31%
11-15 Years	20%
16-20 Years	9%
Over 20 Years	14%

RESPONDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Industry Type	
Industry	**%**
Service	41%
Manufacturing	25%
Government (Local/State/Federal)	13%
Education	9%
Health Care	8%
Other	4%

Company Size	
No. of Employees	**%**
1-50 Employees	12%
51-200 Employees	12%
201-500 Employees	21%
501-1000 Employees	9%
1001-2000 Employees	14%
Over 2001 Employees	32%

Scope of Corporate Operations	
Area	**%**
International	39%
Local/State	37%
National	12%
Regional	12%

Location of Corporate Headquarters	
Country	**%**
United States	83%
Canada	15%
Other	2%

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the members of Professional Secretaries International (PSI) who participated in this survey. Your input and comments are interesting and enlightening.

I would also like to thank Susan Fenner Ph.D., Education Manager of PSI, and Tom Watters CAE, Executive Director of PSI, for their valuable advice and assistance.

Special thanks go to Amelia Barclay CPS, PSI 1993-94 International President, and Elnor Hickman CPS, PSI 1993-94 International President-Elect, for their encouragement and support.

Last but not least, thanks go to my husband Ken for his loving care as I worked on this project.

Kathy Mennen, Director
Administrative Development Institute

NOTES

NOTES

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM
ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Facilitator's Guide to accompany *The Impact of Restructuring on the Secretarial Profession*. Includes a presentation outline and reproducible transparency masters, based on the information in the survey report. FREE to purchasers of this report!

Do-It-Yourself Training: A Guide to Training Others in the Workplace. This informative book shows you how to prepare and execute a training program. Not filled with esoteric theories--just practical, step-by-step guidelines and lots of handy information! Written for the busy office professional. Read it tonight--use it tomorrow! $15 (includes shipping). Available Fall 1994.

- -

☐ Please send me a free copy of the Facilitator's Guide to accompany *The Impact of Restructuring on the Secretarial Profession*.

☐ Please send me _____ additional copies of *The Impact of Restructuring on the Secretarial Profession*. Each report is $10 and includes shipping. Order 3 or more and receive a 20% discount.

☐ Please send me _____ copies of *Do-It-Yourself Training: A Guide to Training Others in the Workplace*. Each book is $15 and includes shipping. Order 3 or more and receive a 20% discount.

Michigan residents add 6% sales tax.

Check or money order for $_____ (U.S.) is enclosed.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

CITY: _____ ST/PROV: _____

ZIP/PC: _____

Send to: Administrative Development Institute
PO Box 1827B
Holland, MI 49422-1827
Tel (616) 395-9426
Fax (616) 395-0309